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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of Petition of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

More than two centuries ago, our Founding Fathers made sacrifices and even died to set up a democracy, where the power of the people would be unimpeded by aristocracy. Today, there's a new aristocracy that threatens democracy, and it's called the 1%. Every way that the power of the wealthiest can be limited by the government is a victory for democracy.

That's precisely where the FCC comes in. One of our most basic rights is the right to communicate, which happens today over broadband and other internet services. If the trends of capitalism run unchecked, one company will control all the communication, and then we are only a step away from the complete suppression of the free exchange of ideas. This is why it's vitally important to fight to ensure the rights of the small local internet providers. If the result of capitalism is that we all drink the same coffee, well, that may be good or bad, but democracy doesn't suffer. If the result of capitalism is that there's only one place to get internet, then inevitably our internet will be no freer than what they have in China. Nobody has more power to stop that from happening than does the FCC.

I urge the FCC to reject the petition of the financial Goliaths (ATT et. al.) that would drastically limit the reach of local internet access. To defend the small local carriers is to ensure a diversity of possible internet providers, which is a guarantee of access to unbiased information and unrestricted communication, which in turn is absolutely essential for this deeply threatened and gasping-for-breath democracy to survive.

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